

OVERVIEW OF THE VIRGINIA CHILD CARE PROVIDER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

What is the scholarship program?

The Virginia Child Care Provider Scholarship Program provides tuition assistance to those employed in child care and those who plan to enter the field of child care who want to attend courses in child care, child development, or child care administration taught at Virginia's institutions of higher learning. The purpose of the scholarship program is to provide child care providers with a foundation in child care. The scholarship program is funded through the Child Care and Development Fund, which is financed through federal funding. Approved courses may be used toward obtaining such achievements as a *Career Studies Certificate in Early Childhood Education*, a *Career Studies Certificate in School-Age Child Care Education*, a *Career Studies Certificate in Child Care Management*, an *Advanced Career Studies Certificate in Early Childhood Education*, an *Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education*, and a *Bachelor Degree in Early Childhood Education*.

How does the scholarship program operate?

Application Process

- **Application Periods.** Scholarship applications must be submitted during the appropriate application period. Application periods are: fall semesters: June 15 – August 20, spring semesters: November 1 – January 7, and summer semesters: March 15 – May 15. Applications received outside these periods will not be processed and will be returned.
- **Process Order.** All awards will be made on a first come, first served basis to those applicants who submit completed applications and meet program eligibility requirements.
- **Notification.** Notification is provided to all applicants and all institutions. Northern Community College - CT&SS (Department) will notify all applicants by mail of the application decision and will inform the institutions of approved scholarships for their respective institutions. For record-keeping purposes, it is recommended that applicants retain a copy of the decision letter for at least one year.
- **Appeals.** There is an appeals process for those

Courses and Institutions

- **Course approval.** The scholarship only pays for courses that have been approved by the Department and are taught at Virginia's public and private colleges and universities.
- **Selection.** The selection of course and college may not be changed once the scholarship has been awarded unless the course was canceled, rescheduled, or filled. The Department must be contacted and approve any substitutions.
- **Institutions.** Recipients may attend various institutions using scholarship funds and are not limited to only attending one institution for all courses paid with scholarship funds.



Awards

- **Limitations.** The scholarship is only good for the semester for which it was awarded and to the person to whom it was awarded.

applicants who have been denied scholarships except when the denial was based on lack of scholarships funds, untimely application, or incomplete application. If a recipient desires to appeal the decision, he must file a written notice of appeal with the Department within 33 days of the date on the denial letter.

Awards (continued)

- **Conditional Award.** Applicants who are in jeopardy of becoming ineligible to receive a scholarship will be awarded a conditional scholarship. Applicants must remain in good standing with the program in order to receive “full” scholarships. (Good standing is discussed below.) Conditional awards will be issued when insufficient information on past scholarships makes it impossible to determine whether someone remains eligible to participate in the program. Once the Department has received adequate information to process the application and if the applicant is determined to be eligible for the scholarship, a “full” scholarship will be issued.
- **Maximum Benefits.** The scholarship will pay for a maximum of two courses per semester and a maximum lifetime award of \$1,707.52 which will pay for eight community college courses at the in-state rate.

Establishing and Maintaining Eligibility

- **Employment.** Only those persons who are employed in child care programs located in Virginia or are domiciled in Virginia and are either employed in a child care program outside of Virginia or have declared an intent to become employed in child care are eligible to participate in this program. Verification of eligibility is required.
- **Good Standing.** In order to be eligible for a scholarship, an applicant must not have three or more occurrences of the following for courses that were awarded a Virginia Child Care Provider Scholarship: (1) did not register for the course after receiving a scholarship, (2) did not complete the course and received a grade of “W” for withdrawal, or (3) did not receive a passing grade.

- **Amount.** The scholarship award pays the cost of the tuition and technology fee for each course up to the lifetime maximum award, which is \$1,707.52. Any additional fees, tuition, or expenses will be the responsibility of the recipient. Most fees will be the student’s responsibility.

Billing

- **Limitations.** Funds can only be used to pay for a course one time. The Department is billed for all students who enroll and do not withdraw prior to the closing of the institution’s published add/drop period. It is very important that recipients follow the registration and withdrawal policies of the colleges/universities.
- **Payee.** Currently, payments for all students attending community colleges are made to the colleges. The Department does not reimburse students attending community colleges. If a student elects to pay for the course while awaiting a decision letter from the college, he should always verify with the community college that it will reimburse him. Institutions that do not have an agreement with the Department may still bill the Department. If the institution does not bill the Department, the student will have to pay for the course and then request reimbursement from the Department.

Additional Responsibilities

- **Final Course Grades.** Final course grades for all courses paid with scholarship funds must be provided to the Department within one month of the semester’s end. Institutions have been requested to provide this information to the Department. However, if the institutions do not provide the grades, it is the recipients’ responsibility to submit them as part of the terms for receiving scholarships and in order to be eligible for subsequent scholarships.
- **Additional Information.** Recipients are expected to provide any additional information requested by the Department to carry out program accountability functions.



Applications

An application can be obtained by: (1) calling the Scholarship Program Hotline at 1-866-636-1608 or in Richmond 225-3110 or (2) using the program's website, which is <http://www.dss.state.va.us/facility/scholarship.html>.

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